



# Tobacco Tid-bits

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Southwest Washington Health District

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## Advocates Overdoing it?

Public health advocates are urged to lighten up and remember smoking is legal and smokers have rights too, in a recent Oregonian commentary written by the paper's associate editor, Doug Bates. Bates lambasted Oregon communities for passing clean air ordinances and accused health advocates of elitism and persecution of smokers. Tobacco prevention advocates reacted right away with a flood of e-mails, faxes and letters to the paper. *Jessica Spiegel of the American Cancer Society* gives some good talking points when faced with opposition such as this.

- Smoking is a public health crisis and the most preventable cause of death in our country.
- Although smoking is legal, 90% of smokers start before it is legal to do so.
- Society does a better job of keeping young people away from drinking and gambling (regulated activities) than we do with tobacco products.

## China Smoking Deaths

Death and illness caused by smoking knows no ethnic boundaries. A third of all China's young men will eventually be killed by tobacco if current smoking patterns continue, according to a recent study. Smoking already kills over 2,000 people every day in China (mostly men). By 2050 the number will be well over 8,000. China now leads all other countries in the number of deaths from smoking, having recently overtaken the US. But, big decreases are also possible. Thirty years ago, Britain had the worst smoking death rates in the world.

Then people accepted that smoking was hazardous, annual cigarette sales in Britain slumped by almost half, and so did tobacco deaths. This *Oxford University report* can be found on the Internet at: [www.ctsu.ox.ac.uk/tobacco](http://www.ctsu.ox.ac.uk/tobacco).

## Pilot Project a Success

A new Media Literacy pilot project that uses teens to teach teens about tobacco influence through media is proving to be a success in its initial trials in Vancouver. The program was developed by the University of Washington to help teens understand how powerful the media is in promoting tobacco use. Vancouver was one of four cities selected to help shape the program through focus groups. Skyridge High School junior Sarah Yamin was one of the students chosen to teach the local media literacy classes with the help of adult coach Kristine Perry of the YMCA. So far they have taught at the YMCA and the Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Teen Center. "I think that these pilots programs have gone very well", said Yamin. "At the end we give participants information on local tobacco prevention groups like BREATHE or TATU and give them an opportunity to get involved. Most are really interested and want to join in the effort." Sarah feels the message is much stronger coming from a peer. If you are interested in having this program presented to your group, contact James Kissee, Southwest Washington Health District Youth Health Promotion Coordinator, at 360.397.8214.

## Statewide Meeting Effective

All counties have their struggles when it comes to tobacco prevention efforts, but there are also many exciting success stories. Those struggles and successes were shared at a statewide tobacco prevention meeting, hosted by Snohomish Health District, in early August in Leavenworth. CESSATION EFFORTS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL included discussions of local programs and county partnerships. "The common struggles included how to effectively work with chewing tobacco," said attendee *Paul Davis, Assistant Director of Substance Abuse Programs with ESD #112*. The successes: "Two counties (Snohomish and King) reported that they were able to get very good response when they offered nicotine replacement therapy as an incentive to people signing up for cessation classes. Other counties said they were successful in reaching out to diverse populations by enlisting a *champion* from those communities in local tobacco coalitions," said Davis. Several counties, including Clark and Skamania, are also offering tobacco cessation and education to juveniles in detention.

## Counter-Advertising Art

MARLBORO DIRECTIONS: INHALE, EXHALE, DIE. Effective and eye-catching messages like this one will soon decorate middle and high school books in Clark and Skamania counties. The Health District has printed 7,500 book covers and 1,500 book markers created from designs entered in the Tobacco Free Youth Art Contests from 1997 to 2000. "We had been polling teens to find other ways to use art contest designs and this seemed like the perfect opportunity to showcase local art," said Theresa Cross, project coordinator. "Book

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covers are required; why not make them educational?" Congratulations to the winning artists: Jackie Rondeau, Camas, Derek Danielson, Camas, Dina Fassilis, Vancouver and Ashley Mallett. Schools can contact Paul Davis, ESD 112, if they would like to receive these free book covers. 360.750.7500 x303.

### GASO Activity Planning

Several groups from Clark and Skamania counties are busy planning activities for the Great American Smokeout November 15. Skamania county will be participating for the first time this year! In Clark County, a concert by Leslie Nuchow is planned for November 9 to kick off the week before the GASO. The planning committee had their first meeting on August 23rd. Representatives from the YMCA, SW Washington Medical Center, ESD 112, American Cancer Society, Clark County Department of Community Services and the Health District attended. When school resumes this fall staff and teens in the BREATHE youth coalition will have a chance to get involved with some exciting ideas they have for school-based Smokeout activities. See calendar for future meeting dates, or contact Theresa Cross at the Health District: 360.397.8215 x3178.

### Opportunities to Learn

Community members interested in learning more about effective strategies for tobacco cessation in youth are invited to attend YOUTH AND TOBACCO, A COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE on October 11, at the SW Washington Medical Center. Speakers include the director of

the Washington Quit Line: Tim McAfee, MD, Group Health Cooperative, Seattle and Jack Hollis, Ph.D., Center for Health Research, Kaiser Permanente, Portland. And on the same day the Medical Center will host medical and nursing Grand Rounds on Cessation issues and smoke-free campuses. (See calendar).

### Teen Voices Wanted

The American Legacy foundation (ALF) is asking teens to have a voice in their new youth Web site. The new site, called VOICE, will be a national resource providing young tobacco control activists with innovative turn-key initiatives, access to experts, access to their peers, motivation through inspiration, and information in their language. VOICE will also provide a place for teens to go when planning local initiatives and events. By completing an on-line survey teens in our community can help ALF develop an effective site. Just log onto [www.your-voice.org](http://www.your-voice.org). *DOH newsletter.*



### Kids Still See Tobacco Ads

The 1998 national tobacco settlement has failed to protect kids from cigarette ads, according to a new study. The study says cigarette makers have kept up a high level of spending for ads targeted at middle school and high school-age children. It says that last year, magazine ads for cigarette brands popular with teens reached 82 percent of teens. The study is

in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, [www.nejm.org](http://www.nejm.org).

(It gets worse - read on.....)

### Editors Note

As a health advocate and mother of two children, I do my best to avoid tobacco. My kids are schooled in tobacco dangers, they arc around smokers rather than walk through their second-hand smoke, and I avoid buying KRAFT products (a subsidiary of Philip Morris). But even with all that, Philip Morris managed to find its way into my home and right under the nose of my four year old daughter. The culprit—*Family Fun Magazine!* The two-page advertisement, saying they support the WE CARD program, managed to squeeze in the name Philip Morris six times as well as an invitation to visit their web site. As much as Philip Morris tries to change public perception of them and buy supporters with flashy PR campaigns like this one, the fact is they spend billions more advertising their deadly product—much of it covertly aimed at kids. Philip Morris used the same ploy when it sent out thousands of free anti-smoking book covers to schools with its name on them. Through an educational campaign orchestrated by the *Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids*, many schools publicly ripped up those book covers. Philip Morris should not be allowed to build brand identity in children's magazine or in schools. I wrote the magazine editor and I encourage you to do the same whenever you see big tobacco's name or influence seeping like second-hand smoke into places that should be safe for our children.

### September/October Calendar of Events

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|-----------------|--|
| <b>Sept. 05</b> | Great American Smokeout Leslie Nuchow concert planning committee meeting. Health District, 2:30-4 PM. Contact : David Killaby 360.699.1994   |
| <b>Sept. 11</b> | Tobacco Free Coalition of Clark County meeting. Southwest Washington Health District, 2:30-4 PM. Contact: James Lanz 360.397.8416  |
| <b>Sept. 13</b> | School Task Force meeting. SWWHD auditorium, 7:30-9 AM. Contact: Theresa Cross 360.397.8215 x3178  |
| <b>Sept. 18</b> | Cessation Task Force meeting. ESD 112, Pacific Room, 2:30-4 PM. Contact: Pam Johnston 360.750.7500x133   |
| <b>Sept. 20</b> | Regional Dept. of Health videoconference. ESD 112, 9-3 PM. Contact: Paul Davis 360.750.7500 x303   |
| <b>Sept. 20</b> | Multnomah County Tobacco Coalition meeting. American Cancer Society, 0330 SW Curry St. Portland, 503.295.6422 for directions. Noon. Contact Erik Vidstrand 503.988. 3663, 1 x28805 |
| <b>Oct. 01</b>  | Great American Smokeout Skamania County planning committee meeting. Skamania County Jail conference room, 2:15-3:15 PM. Contact: James Lanz 360.397.8416.                          |
| <b>Oct. 11</b>  | Youth and Tobacco, a Community Roundtable, SWMC, 1:30-3:30. Contact: James Lanz 360.397.8416   |
| <b>Oct. 11</b>  | Medical Grand Rounds on Cessation, SWMC, 7 AM. Contact: Mary Dickson, 360.256.2112   |
| <b>Oct. 11</b>  | Nursing Grand Rounds on Cessation and Smokefree campuses, SWMC, 11 AM. Contact Mary Dickson.   |